

Six kinds of article

Language corpora (or *corpuses*?) have become big academic and publishing business in recent years, and it is a matter of satisfaction that we have as our leading feature in this issue Professor Sidney Greenbaum's description of ICE, the first international corpus of the English language.

The use of electronic equipment to store, tag, and analyse vast quantities of printed matter is still in its infancy, but already, like Hercules in his cradle, it promises great things. I suspect that this is a topic (along with how it affects the making of dictionaries) about which there is a great deal to be said, and invite further comment from readers who are involved in the new subject *corpus linguistics*, especially as it affects English.

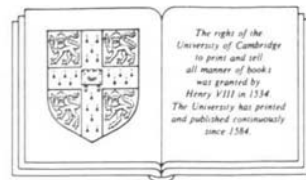
ET has always been varied, and the mix of styles, topics, and opinions found in these pages (academic and popular, sober and in the lighter vein) rightly began some time ago to attract attention and interest around the world. When we started it was not difficult to find material to fill our pages, but some early commentators wondered how long we could keep it up. Surely, at some point, the well of observation on one language – even this deep, vast language – would dry up?

Interestingly enough, however, it has if anything been the other way round: the longer *ET* goes on, the more easily the material is found to fill it, and the more varied the places of origin of that material. Some readers may wonder now and again about the right balance in terms of how they perceive the journal (see p. 57, for example), but I am happy to report that it is readers who largely shape the direction in which our content travels, because many of our contributors are drawn from among our readers, and many readers suggest possible topics.

Currently, articles (specially written, unsolicited, or reprinted from sister publications) tend to range over six areas: varieties of English; aspects of education and language teaching; technological developments linked with language; social issues such as plain English and spelling reform; stylistic, editorial, and other issues relating to usage; and matters of linguistics and language. These have proved rich veins to work with editorially, but we are always glad to hear which other veins readers might like us to mine.

Tom McArthur

The editorial policy of *English Today* is to provide a focus or forum for all sorts of news and opinion from around the world. The points of view of individual writers are as a consequence their own, and do not reflect the opinion of the editorial board. In addition, wherever feasible, *ET* generally leaves unchanged the orthography (normally British or American) and the usage of individual contributors, although the editorial style of the journal itself is that of Cambridge University Press.



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